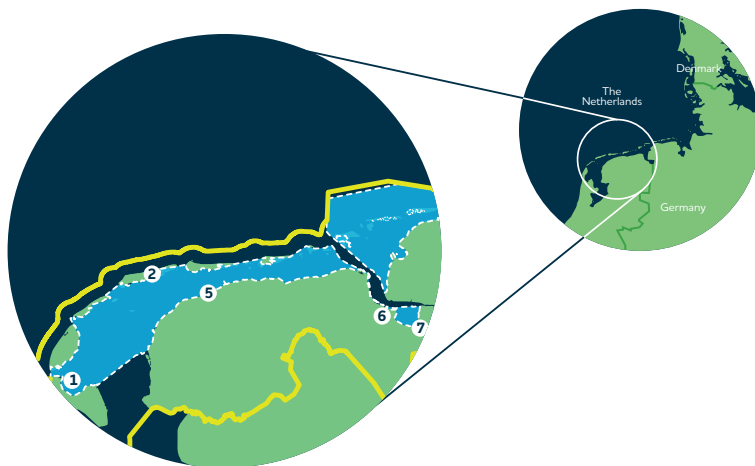


# Experience the Wadden Sea World Heritage in the Netherlands

Whether you visit the endless miles of sandy beaches at Kop van Noord-Holland; marvel at the sights of Friesland, declared as the most beautiful province in the Netherlands; or discover the Groningen Wadden coast characterised by openness, tranquility and space, you're never far from our spectacular nature.



## DAY 1 Kop van Noord-Holland

Travel just 45 minutes from Amsterdam and you will be at the beginning of the Wadden Sea World Heritage.

Discover the least known, yet most accessible, Wadden Island: Wieringen. Despite the fact that Wieringen is now attached to North Holland and Friesland, the former island is well-known for its geology, archaeology, nature and culture. Also look out for the Brent goose, which is found here in large numbers during the winter and therefore often associated with Wieringen.

Head to the dike near Den Helder or the area around the locks of Den Oever to find a good lookout point for the common porpoise. This, the smallest member of the whale family, can often be spotted with the naked eye from here.

From the end of the dike you can also spot many birds, most noticeably a colony of Spoonbills. You can book one of the guided boat trips from the harbour at Den Oever.



## DAYS 2-4 Islands

Visit the Dutch Wadden Islands and feel at one with the ebb and flow, sand and water. There are five such jewels in the north of the Netherlands and all of them are worth a visit. Schiermonnikoog, Ameland, Terschelling, Vlieland and Texel are quite different from each other in many respects, but they all have fine beaches, and the Wadden Sea along their underbellies is full of wonders.

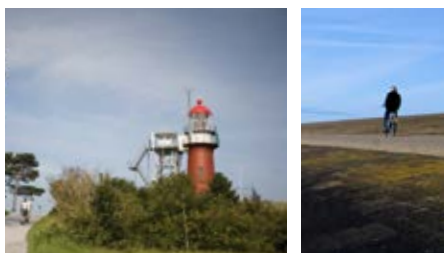
**Schiermonnikoog** is, for the most part, National Park. Experience how an island develops when nature is left to take its course. Every time you visit, the dunes are different.

**Ameland** is best experienced by bicycle. Travel from west to east along the Wadden Sea dike to the 'Het Oerd', nature reserve, where many roes and rare plants can be found.

The Bosplaat nature reserve on the west of **Terschelling** is periodically completely submerged by the North Sea, creating a unique landscape.

**Vlieland** is the smallest inhabited Wadden Island in the Netherlands. It is the only island where the dunes border the Wadden Sea, without a polder in between. From the Vlieland ferry, large numbers of harbour seals, resting or swimming about, may be spotted.

**Texel** is the largest of all of the Dutch Wadden Islands and is known in particular as a bird island. However, Texel's nature has much more to offer than just birds. Approximately one third of Texel is nature reserve, but many unusual plants and animals can also be found outside of these reserves.



## DAY 5 Friesland

There are numerous ways in which to explore the wondrous world of the Dutch Wadden Sea: on foot with binoculars in hand, on two wheels or from the water.

You can attend a fascinating lecture about the region, or visit one of the many exhibitions which look 'behind the scenes' of this World Nature Heritage Site. Mudflats walks are a must if you want to experience the Wadden Sea, you can even book a guided crossing to one of the islands.

Join one of the guided nature tours to discover the huge variety of fauna and flora and experience the majestic force of the elements. Guided tours take place every day of the year and sometimes at night as well.

The whole landscape of northern Friesland was formed by a struggle against the sea, and the evidence is everywhere. Take a look the old dikes at the 'Biltdijken' or visit the highest dwelling mound of the Netherlands in Hegebeintum.



## DAY 6 Lauwersmeer region and Groningen

The Lauwersmeer region is situated where the rivers Lauwers, Hunze and Ee once flowed into the Lauwerszee.

Here, the tidal current from the Wadden Sea had practically no obstacles in the way. For sea defense reasons the Lauwerszee was closed in 1968. A beautiful nature reserve developed and today it's a National Park where you can marvel at the wet grasslands and the enormous richness in birds.

At Noordpolderzijl you can visit one of the few tidal harbours of the Dutch Wadden Sea, the perfect place to experience the tide.

And pay a visit to Punt de Reide in the extreme northeast of Groningen. An important resting place for harbour seals is located offshore, where up to 300 animals at a time may be observed. The seals can be watched without disturbing them, thanks to a thin hide.



## DAY 7 Take a trip across the border

ONE Wadden Sea, ONE Global Heritage

Continue your journey of Wadden Sea World Heritage experiences with a visit to Germany, where you can see for yourself that the Wadden Sea World Heritage is an inseparable ecosystem that knows no borders.

Explore Dollard, Germany and visit the bird watcher's hut – the 'Kiekkaaste' – at Nieuwe Statenzijl on the border with Germany. Nieuwe Statenzijl is a very interesting place, where bicyclists and hikers can cross the border to see the German part of the Dollard. During the summer it is possible to take a small ferry, especially for bicycles from Delfzijl to Ditzum and Emden in Germany.